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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR RICE MEETS NIGERIAN PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OGWU

Classified By: ECOSOC Robert Hagen for reasons 1.5(B) and (D)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: During a February 12 initial call on Nigerian Permanent Representative to the UN Uche Joy Ogwu, Ambassador Rice pressed Ogwu on the need for Nigeria to expeditiously complete its preparations for deployment of a battalion to AMISOM in Somalia. Ogwu referred to difficulties in logistics and understanding the situation on the ground in Somalia, but said she would "exert all the pressure I can" to ensure timely deployment. Ogwu asked for an emergency open Security Council meeting on Somalia and invited Ambassador Rice to participate in the upcoming C-34 review of peacekeeping operations that Ogwu will chair. END SUMMARY

¶2. (C) Ambassador Rice began a February 12 initial call on Nigeria's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Uche Joy Ogwu by inquiring on the status of the Nigerian deployment of a battalion to AMISOM in Somalia. PR Ogwu stated that during a visit to Nigeria the previous week, she had consulted with Ministry of Defense staff and would continue to "expert all the pressure I can" to ensure timely deployment. She referred to difficulties in logistics and understanding the fluid situation on the ground as factors impeding timely completion of Nigeria's preparations. Ogwu requested an emergency open debate in the Security Council on Somalia in order to better understand recent developments.

¶3. (SBU) In response, Ambassador Rice noted that the US had promised to assume a substantial part of the cost of the AMISOM support package that had been discussed in the Security Council earlier that day. She warned that recent news from Somalia underscored the need for expedited deployment to forestall any possibility of Al-Shabaab taking over Mogadishu, noting that extremists had just fired on a UN ship.

¶4. (U) PR Ogwu briefly discussed the regional situation, noting that Liberia and Sierra Leone seemed to be "settling down." However, Guinea-Bissau presented a "new type of problem", referring to narco-trafficking and state corruption, and Ogwu said that Africa was determined to address the narco-trafficking threat to Guinea-Bissau. In discussing West Africa, she did not refer to the recent coup in Guinea.

¶5. (U) PR Ogwu pledged her full cooperation on issues of common concern at the UN, including poverty and health, climate change, and improving peacekeeping, noting that she is a "team player" and the days of anti-Americanism are gone. She offered to put Ambassador Rice in contact with former PM Obasanjo, now the Secretary General's Special Envoy to the Great Lakes, during his next visit to New York. She noted that PM Obasanjo had "come full circle" in returning to the Great Lakes region and had complete mastery of his portfolio. In her capacity as chair for upcoming C-34 committee deliberations on peacekeeping, PR Ogwu invited Ambassador Rice to participate and present US perspectives.
Rice